

15 November 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Personnel Operations Division

FROM : A/JOTP/OP

SUBJECT : Suggestions for Supervisory Training Course

1. Need for a positive attitude on the part of supervisors toward federal service in general and the Agency in particular. In my opinion, too many of our supervisors are outspokenly cynical and glib in their attitude toward the Agency. This air of cynicism has become quite fashionable, demonstrating that the speaker is an "old hand," tempered by the "realities" of the Agency's activities, and therefore not to be fooled by naive statements or actions. Certainly this is an understandable feeling, and reflects the normal frustrations faced by anyone working in our line of work. But I doubt that many supervisors realize the effect their cynicism may have on their subordinates, particularly those who are new and/or impressionable. The supervisor has a responsibility to awaken the neophyte to the realities of big government, bureaucracy, and those problems peculiar to our Agency. However, the supervisor has an even greater responsibility to see that the new employee adopts a positive attitude toward the Agency's mission in general and his specific job in particular. If necessary, the supervisor may even want to resort to "flag-waving" and "organization man" pep talks. While some may consider such

DOC	7	REV DATE	16/03/82	BY	018995
ORIG COMP	32	ORI	32	TYPE	01
ORIG CLASS	44	PAGES	44	REV CLASS	4
JUST		NEXT REV		AUTH	15-2

an approach naive and "corny," I have seen it work time and again, even with "old hands." In short, supervisors should strive to assume a positive stance in all their supervisory dealings with subordinates, especially those who are inexperienced and impressionable.

2. Need for supervisors to keep informed on problems and gripes circulating among their subordinates, and to keep their superiors informed on potential problem areas. I believe that despite sincere efforts on the part of top level management in the Agency, there has always been a serious communication gap between the leaders and the lower echelons of this Agency. Policies and new procedures often seem to have been formulated without getting a reaction from the rank and file people who will administer them. Certainly I am not advocating a policy of letting the "tail wag the dog." The chain of command line should be clearly defined and strongly enforced, with supervisors insuring that tasks are performed as directed. What I am advocating is an emphasis on encouraging the lower echelons freely and candidly to express their gripes, uncertainties and questions to their immediate supervisors. Further, these views should then be passed up the chain of command to the very top levels. Even though many of the complaints may be petty, naive or unsolvable, I believe top level managers should be aware of them as background information in making their decisions. I believe this informal line of communication should complement the existing Inspector General and Suggestion Award systems. It could operate easily and informally

at all levels, if supervisors encourage such communication, and insure that an employee is not penalized for expressing his opinions.

3. Need for Supervisors to keep their subordinates informed on what is going on in the Agency, within the limits of security and "need to know" for certain sensitive areas. I believe this concept is generally well carried out, but should be reiterated. Information from top level staff meetings should be disseminated progressively down to the bottom of the totem pole.


A/JOTP/OP

25X1A9a